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#### **ABSTRACT**

**IDENTIFIERS** 

This study examines the needs of scholars who study opera, including what materials they use, how often they cite foreign language materials, and what kinds of operas are studied most frequently. A citation analysis was performed on "Cambridge Opera Journal," "Opera Quarterly," and "Opera Journal." Results are presented related to: nationality of the composer/performer, century of the composition, format of the sources cited, language of the sources, country of publication of the sources, and year of publication. It was found that many materials used by opera scholars are more than 15 years old and more than a quarter are more than 50 years old. Opera scholars write most often about German/Austrian composers and performers in the 19th century and Americans in the 20th century. Other languages and formats are important, including French and German in the former category and journals and collections in the latter. Overall, German/Austrian composers and performers are the most frequently discussed. (Contains 28 references and 6 tables.) (Author/MES)



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A Master's Research Paper submitted to the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree Master of Library Science

by

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April, 2001

Masters Research Paper by

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#### I. INTRODUCTION

It is always necessary for librarians to know what patrons need, and to keep in mind this need and how it changes depending upon the type of library and its users. So, what do music scholars, particularly those focusing on opera, need in the library they use? Citation analysis is one way of determining what library users need, and while these studies have been done extensively in the sciences, there have been few in the discipline of music. However, the latter is not completely unheard of, and some librarians have performed citation analyses to determine the needs in music libraries (Kuyper-Rushing 1999; Griscom 1983; and Baker 1978). In Griscom's and Kuyper-Rushing's studies specifically, they went beyond simple citation analysis and divided their findings by fields of music (e.g. musicology or music theory). But perhaps it would be useful to approach music citation analysis by subject (e.g. orchestral or operatic). A lacuna exists when it comes to studying the subjects (as opposed to fields) investigated by music scholars. Music librarians must recognize that those needs often include crossing fields for the sake of a specific subject.

Music scholars, as well as a lot of music students at various educational levels, do study music in this way, so as to examine a certain subject from many angles, and one of these subjects is opera. If librarians could ascertain what needs these scholars have, it would aid them in providing information to their users and saving money by buying the proper materials. For instance, it would be of little use for a music library to spend money on a journal dealing mainly with seventeenth century Italian opera, if scholars actually need current information on nineteenth century German opera. And while citation analyses have looked at resources used by musicologists, music theorists, music



educators, and even performers, it would be beneficial to see if opera scholars focus on these fields, or on several facets of opera, such as opera from a specific country in a specific century.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the needs of scholars who study opera. What do these scholars use? On the subject of opera, do most scholars refer to journals? If so, are they likely to cite recent journals, or do they frequently refer to journals, say, twenty years or more old? Perhaps scholars of opera use only a limited number of journals and prefer to study books. And if this is so, are they using specific, scholarly texts or reference materials? Another purpose of this study is to see how often opera scholars cite foreign language materials, looking at both the languages and the countries of publication. Also, what kinds of operas are being studied most frequently is important so as to properly develop a collection. "Kind" of opera is defined here as what nationality is the composer of the opera and in what century was the opera composed. (For this last question, "nationality," "composer," "century," and "opera" could be pluralized, since some articles will deal with more than one of each of these.)

#### Definition of Terms

Before proceeding further, it is important to define a few terms, beginning with opera. This is a term that may seem simple enough, but scholars and laymen alike have argued over the murky lines dividing opera from other theatrical, musical forms. There is



general consensus that opera is an art form that began around the turn of the seventeenth century, pioneered by a group of Italians in Florence, known as the Florentine Camerata. But, perhaps it would be more beneficial to list some forms that for the purpose of my study will not be considered opera. Compositions that are generally considered to be and are intended by their composers to be musical theater are not operas. Some examples of this are popular musicals like *Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Misérables*. Even though these shows are almost completely sung, they are considered musicals by both music scholars and their composers for a variety of theoretical and stylistic attributes that I do not have the time to distinguish in this study. Also not included in my study are operettas, such as the many works by Gilbert and Sullivan. Another form that will not be covered here is early German Singspiel. These compositions are defined in A History of Western Music as the "German version of opera . . . a play that interspersed songs with spoken dialogue" (Grout and Palisca 1996, 336). They first appeared in the sixteenth century, and later copied English ballad operas (which also will not be covered in this study), and were the precursor to German language operas. These German language operas include Mozart's Die Zauberflöte, which will be included. Other forms that will be part of the analysis are opera buffa, opera comique, and opera seria, for example.

## Limitations of the Study

This citation analysis will be limited to the footnotes and end references of primary articles in *Opera Journal*, *Opera Quarterly*, and *Cambridge Opera Journal*.



These three journals were selected because of their importance to opera scholarship. The primary articles are those of scholarly focus, meaning that features such as letters to the editor and reviews will not be considered, mainly because they generally do not include citations. Another obvious limitation is that only articles dealing primarily with my definition of opera will be included in the analysis. This study will also be limited to a specific amount of time, as well as these three journals, so this analysis cannot be generalized to all music libraries concerned with opera. However, it is hoped that the findings will at the very least provide a starting point for the future.



#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

David Baker (1978) studied the use of music scholars in England by counting the citations in three major musicology journals of that country: *Music and letters, Music review*, and *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*. He examined these three journals from 1965 to 1974 and counted over seven thousand citations, taking note of bibliographic form, place and date of publication, and language. These findings show that in these journals, most articles deal with twentieth century matters in England. The twentieth century articles have the most overall citations, and most of the cited print sources were published between the years 1940-1959. Almost 42% of the citations come from books, and another nearly 20% from journals. Not surprisingly, the majority of citations are from English language sources, generally published in London. But even with the English bias, Baker points out that "the predominance of German-language materials should be noted" (1978, 199).

Richard Griscom's (1983) music citation analysis takes a different angle from Baker's. Rather than focusing on language and format, Griscom looks for the obsolescence of periodical literature in music. He studies thesis and dissertation citations of music students at Indiana University, submitted from 1975 to 1980, subdividing them by field: musicology, music theory, music education, and even performance (the last field being so small, that he did not bother analyzing the data). He discovered that the rate of obsolescence in musicology journals is rather slow, but in the other two fields, obsolescence is, relatively, more rapid than most other humanities. Because of the accelerated obsolescence rates in music theory and music education, the overall obsolescence rate of music periodicals is higher than the other humanities disciplines. In



addition to analyzing obsolescence, Griscom also provides a list of core journals for music scholarship, in general, as well as musicology, music theory, and music education, specifically.

Expanding on this idea, Lois Kuyper-Rushing (1999) launched a citation study in 1993. Using *Dissertation Abstracts* to track down, and eventually to analyze the citations of 118 dissertations written by music students in 1993, she goes beyond Griscom's study that only examined the citations from theses and dissertations at one university. Kuyper-Rushing used dissertations from all across the United States to compile a list of core journals, as well as to document the other most frequently cited formats and see how her study compares with Griscom's. She finds that when the citations were broken down by field, her core journals overlap little with Griscom's (1999, 160-161). However, when looking at all dissertation citations, her core list and Griscom's overlap significantly. Another of her findings is that Bradford's Law applies to her study—the majority of citations are from a small amount of journals. Also, books are cited more than journals or any other format in these dissertations.

Another music citation analysis was performed for a Kent State MLS research paper by David Warner (1999). This study centers on the authors cited, to see if authors are predominately male or female and if they tended to collaborate. He also examines format, primary verses secondary sources, currency, and language. Not unexpectedly, most citations are in reference to books in English about specific composers written by white men working alone. Primary and secondary sources are fairly evenly divided, and older materials are found to be so necessary (not that newer ones were not), that Warner



suggests the "development of a retrospective collection development policy" (Warner 1999, 17).

Virgil Diodato and Fran Smith (1993) conducted an even more in depth study as to the usefulness of resources depending upon their age. They updated and expanded a previous study of obsolescence conducted by R. M. Longyear in 1977, looking at both synchronous and diachronous obsolescence in music literature. These types of studies aim to show how long sources will be useful. The first type looks to the past and tabulates the median age of citations in a document. In music (particularly musicology), this median age is much higher than in other fields, meaning that music literature obsolesces slowly. Diachronous obsolescence uses a point in the past to look at the future so as to predict how long an item will be used. This is accomplished by finding the half-life, which shows when an item will probably no longer be cited. The half-life of music literature is longer than most, again displaying the slow obsolescence rate in the field. The authors' other finding is that their study, did indeed, confirm Longyear's findings of more than a decade previous.

Robert T. Bottle and William W. Chase (1972) performed one other analysis of music literature. They used RILM (Repertoire International de la Litterature Musicale) to gather citations, looking at language and the author's country of origin, as well as the content of titles. Additionally, the authors assess the effectiveness of RILM's abstracting by comparing abstracts with the descriptors RILM indexers use. American authors are best represented, and over 70% of the items are in English. The authors also find RILM's indexing to be efficient, only not finding important terms 13.5% of the time. The category most likely to be missing important indexing terms is that of Period and/or



Style. But the authors forgive this problem, because it is the most difficult to index.

They explain, "Labels which are so freely given by historians to periods blur beyond the point of being useful" (Bottle and Chase 1972, 475).

Several citation analyses have also been performed on art literature, which can shed light on music citation analysis. John Cullars (1992) conducted one of the most significant studies. He wanted to know what materials were most frequently cited in art monographs, and took a random sample of monograph citations in *RILA* (*Repertoire international de la literature de l'art*) published in 1985 and 1986 to determine format, language, publication date, and other criteria. His definition of a monograph is "a book with a minimum length of seventy-five pages of text . . . that has a single author and is a continuous work," (Cullars 1992, 330) finding that other monographs (books) are cited most frequently. Another aspect of his analysis compares the citations of fine arts scholars to other humanities, where there exist some differences, but hardly the huge differences dividing the humanities and the sciences.

Erika Dowell also studied art history citations. The focus of her study is determining if art history has grown more interdisciplinary over 40 years. She relies heavily on the interdisciplinary analysis done by Simonton in the 1940s and 1950s as a comparison to her own 1980s and 1990s analysis. Through these two studies of interdisciplinarity in art history, Dowell was able to see that things had changed slightly. Scholars in the later study cite fewer fine arts sources, as well as history materials, in favor of resources dealing with religion, the social sciences, and language and literature, in particular. For her citation analysis she is using *Art Bulletin* and *Burlington Magazine*, devising categories for fine arts, history, social sciences, science and technology,



philosophy and psychology, religion and theology, language and literature, music, bibliography and library science, and general works.

One other citation analysis performed in art history is Diane M. Nelson's study (1977), looking at multiple ways of doing fine arts citation analysis. She feels that art studies must look at a different way of conducting analyses than those used in the sciences, because difficulties in art citation analyses "derive from the very nature of scholarly literature within the discipline" (Nelson 1977, 390). As an example, Nelson examines the collection catalogs with materials on Chinese bronze vessels. The biggest difference between her study and most others is that the citations analyzed are from non-serial literature. The findings of her study showed that in the area of Chinese art, at least, collection catalogs can be an extremely useful research tools for serious scholars as well as beginning students. Also, there is little relationship between use and age, suggesting that it would be profitable to keep catalogs maintained.

Finally, Henry Voos and Katherine S. Dagaev (1976) provide an alternative approach to standard citation analysis. They believe that all citations are not equal, but are usually counted as equal, because each occurrence of an item is counted only once. Instead, the authors feel it would be beneficial to count every citation and every occurrence of an item. The theory behind this method is that if an author cites an item multiple times, it is probably more significant to the study than an item cited only once. In fact, the authors write that "We do not believe that there can be much argument with the premise that an author who is cited more than once in an article might have more relevance, and/or importance than an author who is cited only once in an article" (Voos and Dagaev 1976 20-21). Voos and Dagaev come to several conclusions, including the

pattern of citations throughout an article, but possibly the most significant is that the number of times an item is cited does affect the value.



#### III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology to be used in this study is citation analysis. The analysis will be of three prominent opera journals, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, *Opera Quarterly*, and *Opera Journal*. These three journals were selected for a number of reasons, one being their predominance in the subject. Another reason is their availability and that they are all in English. I will begin with the most recent editions available (2000 or 1999) and work backwards until I have collected approximately 1,000 citations. These journals are all published quarterly and contain one to five scholarly articles, which vary greatly in the number of citations from 10 to 100. The study will utilize the advice of Voos and Dagaev (1976), and shall count every citation, including items that are repeated. This is because "It is clear that multiple citations to some source articles do occur and are an integral part of figuring the value of a citation" (Voos and Dagaev 1976, 21).

When examining these citations, six questions will be asked. The first question is what is the format? Is the citation to a book, journal, or some other source? Other questions are: in what language is the cited item, and in what country was it published? Next, when was the item published? More specifically, in what range of years was the cited source published? Also, what is/are the nationality/nationalities of the composer/composers or performer/performers, discussed in the article? (I pluralize this because articles sometimes compare the operas of composers from different nationalities, such as the many studies comparing Verdi and Wagner.) Finally, in what century was the opera discussed composed? (The same pluralization applies to this question as it does to the previous question.) For a list of coded categories, see appendix A.



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Before beginning the analysis, it should be asserted that in many ways this can only be considered a pre-study. If a more formal investigation were conducted, some changes in methodology would have to be made. The problem arises in the vast difference in the number of articles in each issue and the normal number of citations in each article. Opera Journal only has one to three articles with around 20 citations each. On the other hand, Cambridge Opera Journal has four or five articles, often with more than 100 citations each. Opera Quarterly lies somewhere in between. This means that four years of Opera Journal where necessary and only one issue of Cambridge Opera Journal to get roughly the same number of citations from each journal. For a more accurate account of what opera scholars are studying and using for those studies, random samples of citations should be taken from Cambridge Opera Journal and Opera Quarterly. This should be done so as to cover a similar time span as Opera Journal. This similar time span will provide a better idea of what scholars need and are studying. Because of the requirements and time limitations of this current study, random samples of citations have not been taken from Cambridge Opera Journal or Opera Quarterly, but this step is recommend for future studies.



#### IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA

### Nationality and Century

Of the articles examined in this citation analysis, the highest percentage of nationalities is German/Austrian at 30.2%, and the most discussed century is the twentieth at 39.5%. However, it is interesting to note that when these two figures are paired in a meaningful way, the most frequently discussed music is a tie between nineteenth century German/Austrian opera and twentieth century American (see Appendix C). A few of the articles also discuss more than one nationality and/or century. Another important note to make relates to the "na" articles. A complete list of why no nationality or century could be assigned is in Appendix C, but one reason should certainly be mentioned here. Four articles rather than dealing with a composer or performer concern opera houses, including a three part series in *Opera Quarterly* about the Metropolitan Opera House.

Table 1

Nationality (of composer/performer)

Nationality	Frequency	Percent
German/Austrian	13	30.2
French	7	16.3
na	7	16.3
Italian	6	14
American	5	11.6
Swedish	2	4.7
Eastern European	1	2.3
English	1	2.3
Greek	1	2.3
Total	43	100



Table 2
Century (of composition)

Century	Frequency	Percent
20	17	20.5
20	1/	39.5
19	9	20.9
18	7	16.3
na	7	16.3
17	3	7
Total	43	100

#### Format

As expected from looking at previous music citation analyses (e.g. Warner 1999), books are far and away the most cited sources (41.8%). Journals follow at 17% and the other formats are further behind and scattered. One surprise is the number of newspapers cited (87 or 7.7%). Newspapers seem to be particularly invaluable to scholars writing about the early twentieth century. And while many of these historical studies rely on newspapers, studies of a theoretical nature contain many of the citations to scores or libretti. However, other scholars have studied the differing needs of historians and theorists (e.g. Griscom 1983), so they will not be dealt with further. Despite these generalizations, *opera* scholars (as opposed to musicologists or theorists specifically) have many different format needs, but it must be remembered that when building a collection for these scholars, books are by far the most important. It should also be kept in mind that journals and collections are also quite necessary. One last note about format concerns scores and libretti. Surely it is obvious that scores are an important part of all musical scholarship, but the number of scores/libretti cited may seem low to some. Many



articles include musical excerpts within the text but are not officially cited, so this low count should be viewed with this in mind.

Table 3
Format

Format	Frequency	Percent
book	473	41.8
journal	192	17
collection	104	9.2
newspaper	87	7.7
score/libretto	64	5.7
reference book	44	3.9
interview	40	3.5
letter	31	2.7
recording	25	2.2
dissertation/thesis	18	1.6
government doc.	18	1.6
playbill	13	1.1
program note	8	.7
liner note	5	.4
email	2	.2
web page	2	.2
performance	1	.1
poem	1	.1
radio broadcast	1	.1
business register	1	·.1
subscription list	1	.1
Total	1131	100

#### Language

It comes as no surprise that most opera scholars writing in English cite English language sources. When combined with works in English translation, 72% of all cited sources are in English. Even so, items in other languages are not negligible. Italian, French, and German sources play a significant role in opera scholarship, particularly Italian, which had even more citations than English translation. Even though the above-



mentioned foreign languages were by far the most often cited, it should be remembered that when covering operas not in those languages, sources in that language could be important. It should also be noted that five cited items are in two languages. This phenomenon is because many scores will have the text in both its original language and a translation, usually English. In the seven cases that no language was applicable, the citation is to music without text.

Table 4
Language

Language	Frequency	Percent
	·	
English	689	60.7
Italian	136	12
English translation	128	11.3
French	104	9.1
German	68	5.9
na	7	.6 ·
Czech	2	.2
Russian	2	.2
Total	1136	100

#### Country

Yet again, there is no great surprise that the majority of the items cited were published in America (56.1%). England also published many of the sources, followed logically by Italy, France, and Germany in the same order that those countries ranked in terms of language. But many more nations published than there are languages represented in the citations. This can be attributed to, for instance, Swiss publications in French and many countries publishing in English even though it is not the native tongue of the country. Thirteen citations were not attributed to a country because the citations were incomplete, and despite aggressive searching, no country could be discerned. No

country was given, for example, when authors cited Ovid but did not cite a specific edition published in a certain country. However, including such information is not particularly vital in terms of publishing country, since Ovid can be found in every country.

Table 5
Country (of publication)

Country	Frequency	Percent
America	634	56.1
England	151	13.4
Italy	119	10.5
France	99	8.8
Germany	75	6.6
Canada	13	1.1
na	13	1.1
Switzerland	8	.7
Czechoslovakia	5	.4
The Netherlands	4	.4
Australia	2	.2
Belgium	2	.2
Sweden	2	.2
India	1	.1
Japan	1	.1
Russia	1	.1
South Korea	1	.1
Total	1131	100

## Year

Most of the sources cited have been published in the past 35 years, but when the works were published more specifically is somewhat difficult to say. Within the coded categories, the highest percentage of citations fell in between 1965 and 1984 (25.6%). Perhaps it would have been better to divide the year categories further, but even within the numbers recorded, it can be seen that opera scholars use a great deal of materials



more than 15 years old. Many citations, however, were to items less than 15 years old (34.5%), so an ongoing collection policy is important; but let us again look at the other end of the spectrum. More than 10% of the sources cited were published between 1945 and 1964, again showing the importance of older materials to opera scholars. In fact, 27.6% of the sources cited were published before 1944. My final note dealing with years is the 18 not applicables. This occurred, like it did with country, because either no edition was given or the citation was incomplete. Also, there were two citations to works not yet published.

Table 6
Year (of publication)

Year	Frequency	Percent
1965-1984	290	25.6
1985-1994	257	22.7
1995-2000	133	11.8
1945-1964	121	10.7
1925-1944	115	10.2
1800-1899	106	9.4
1900-1924	52	4.6
1700-1799	29	2.6
na	18	1.6
pre1700	10	.9
Total	1131	100

#### V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Even though this is in many ways only a pre-study, I hoped to find whether opera scholars need significantly different materials than those needed by theorists, musicologists, or educators. The finding that opera scholars use primarily English language books published in America is nothing new. The fact that older sources are heavily cited is also a finding of others who have done music citation analyses. Perhaps one difference can be found in language. Both Baker (1978) and Warner (1999) found that while English is the primary language, German is very important, and Warner also mentions French. In the current analysis, the language most frequently cited behind English and even ahead of English translation is Italian. This has an interesting implication since 13 of the articles dealt with German or Austrian opera and only six with Italian. One would think that there would be a correlation between the nationality discussed and foreign language citations. But it should still note that German and French language sources are important to opera scholars. Because collecting foreign language sources seems absolutely necessary, Warner's suggestion of that collecting foreign language dictionaries also appears necessary (1999, 17).

#### Need for Future Research

This study is just to provide a jumping-off point. In fact, as stated earlier, it can best be described as a pre-study designed to give an idea of the issues and possible results of a more thorough study. In a more complete study, random samples of citations from the journals with large citation counts would need to be done, or perhaps more like journals could be used. However, that last suggestion is not the one I would recommend,



because even though *Opera Journal* has on average fewer citations per article, it is still an important publication for the subject.

Another consideration for future studies is to increase the number of citations counted. Of course more citations generally give better results, but since trends in what is being studied are a consideration, too many citations could be counter-productive. If for the sake of getting more citations a researcher goes back say, ten years, current trends will be difficult to ascertain accurately. Perhaps if more citations are desired, another journal could be added.

Future studies could also take into account the coding issues I know I would change if I did another citation analysis of opera literature. The first is to not leave newspapers in the "other" column for format, but provide it with its own unique category. Also, greater definition should be given to years of publication. I suggest 1975-1984 and 1965-1974, instead of 1965-1984. Perhaps the category 1945-1964 should also be split. And the future study that would personally interest me most would look closer at language. It could be potentially thought-changing to music librarians and scholars to see that unlike the previous citation analyses Italian, not German, may be the most important foreign language for some music scholars.



# Appendix A

Code Sheet

FORMAT: bookjournal reference book score/libretto
dissertation/thesis collection other
LANGUAGE: English German French Italian
English translation other
COUNTRY (of publication): America Germany France
Italy England other
YEAR (of publication): 1995-20001985-19941965-1984
1945-19641925-19441900-19241800-1899
1700-1799 pre 1700
NATIONALITY (of composer or performer): German/Austria Italian
French English Eastern European American other
<b>CENTURY (of composition)</b> : pre 17 <sup>th</sup> 17 <sup>th</sup> 18 <sup>th</sup> 19 <sup>th</sup>
20 <sup>th</sup>



# Appendix B

# Actual Coded Categories

Nationality (of composer/performer) Germany/Austria France Italy America Sweden Eastern European English Greek	Language English Italian English translation French German Czech Russian na
Century (of composition) 20 19 18 17 na	Country America England Italy France Germany Canada
Format book journal collection newspaper score/libretto reference book interview letter	Switzerland Czechoslovakia The Netherlands Australia Belgium Sweden India Japan Russia South Korea
recording dissertation/thesis government document playbill program note liner note email web page performance poem radio broadcast business register subscription list	Year 1965-1984 1985-1994 1995-2000 1945-1964 1925-1944 1800-1899 1900-1924 1700-1799 pre 1700 na



# Appendix C Nationality/Century Pairings

Nationality and Century German/Austria 19 <sup>th</sup>	Frequency 5
American 20 <sup>th</sup>	5
German/Austrian 18th	4
German/Austrian 20th	4
Italian 19 <sup>th</sup>	3
French 20 <sup>th</sup>	3
Italian 17 <sup>th</sup>	2
French 17 <sup>th</sup>	2
French 18 <sup>th</sup>	2
Swedish 20 <sup>th</sup>	2
Eastern European 20 <sup>th</sup>	1
Italian 20 <sup>th</sup>	1
Greek 20 <sup>th</sup>	1
English 18 <sup>th</sup>	1
Total	36

NA reasons	Frequency
Specific Opera Companies	4
Opera Companies in General	1
19 <sup>th</sup> Century in General	1
Opera on the Internet	1
Total	7





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